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IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A hand-held amusement device, comprising:

a spherical ball that defines a diameter; and

a base having a length up to six inches and at least three times as great as the diameter, wherein the base is configured to be held in a person's hand, and the ball is rotatably mounted in the base in such a manner that respective portions of the ball protrude outward from opposite sides of the base, and a person can hold the ball between a finger and opposing thumb and spin the base about the ball, and alternatively, a person can place his fingers on the base in a manner that straddles the ball and roll the device across a support surface, wherein a hole extends through an end of the base, whereby a person can alternatively insert a finger through the hole and spin the device about the finger.

2. (cancelled)

3. (currently amended) ~~The amusement device of claim 1~~ A hand-held amusement device, comprising:

a spherical ball that defines a diameter; and

a base having a length up to six inches and at least three times as great as the diameter, wherein the base is configured to be held in a person's hand, and the ball is rotatably mounted in the base in such a manner that respective portions of the ball protrude outward from opposite sides of the base, and a person can hold the ball between a finger and opposing thumb and spin the base about the ball, and alternatively, a person can place

his fingers on the base in a manner that straddles the ball and roll the device across a support surface, wherein an outside edge of the base is bounded by an arcuate surface that extends substantially the length of the base, whereby a person can alternatively place fingers on a side of the base opposite the arcuate surface and rock the device back and forth on the support surface.

4. (original) The amusement device of claim 3, wherein the side is bounded by a flat surface that extends substantially the length of the base.

5. (original) The amusement device of claim 1, further comprising a cylinder rotatably mounted on the base.

6. (original) The amusement device of claim 5, wherein a portion of the cylinder protrudes outward from the base, whereby a person can roll the cylinder against the support surface.

7. (original) The amusement device of claim 5, wherein a notch in the base exposes more than half of an outer cylindrical surface defined by the cylinder.

8. (currently amended) ~~The amusement device of claim 1, further comprising~~ A hand-held amusement device, comprising:

a spherical ball that defines a diameter;

a base having a length up to six inches and at least three times as great as the diameter, wherein the base is configured to be held in a person's hand, and the ball is rotatably mounted in the base in such a manner that respective portions of the ball protrude outward from opposite sides of the base, and a person can hold the ball between a finger and opposing thumb and

spin the base about the ball, and alternatively, a person can place his fingers on the base in a manner that straddles the ball and roll the device across a support surface; and

a plunger movably mounted in telescoping fashion on the base.

9. (original) The amusement device of claim 8, wherein the plunger is resiliently biased to protrude outward beyond a first end of the base.

10. (original) The amusement device of claim 9, further comprising a clip slidably mounted on the first end of the base.

11. (original) The amusement device of claim 10, wherein the clip is movable between an extended position covering a relatively larger portion of the plunger, and a retracted position covering a relatively smaller portion of the plunger.

12. (original) The amusement device of claim 11, wherein the clip resiliently snaps into and out of each said position.

13. (original) The amusement device of claim 1, further comprising a lever pivotally mounted on the base.

14. (currently amended) ~~The amusement device of claim 13~~ A hand-held amusement device, comprising:

a spherical ball that defines a diameter;

a base having a length up to six inches and at least three times as great as the diameter, wherein the base is configured to be held in a person's hand, and the ball is rotatably mounted in the base in such a manner that respective portions of the ball protrude outward from opposite sides of the base, and a person can hold the ball between a finger and opposing thumb and

spin the base about the ball, and alternatively, a person can place his fingers on the base in a manner that straddles the ball and roll the device across a support surface; and

a lever pivotally mounted on the base, wherein the lever is resiliently biased to remain in a retracted position within a perimeter defined by the base.

15. (original) The amusement device of claim 14, wherein the lever is movable to an extended position protruding outward from the perimeter of the base.

16. (original) The amusement device of claim 14, wherein a hole extends through an end of the base.

17. (original) The amusement device of claim 16, wherein the lever is configured and arranged to align with the hole when in the retracted position.

18. (cancelled)

19. (cancelled)

20. (original) The amusement device of claim 1, wherein at least one word is embossed in braille on the base.

21. (previously amended) A hand-held amusement device, comprising:

a base, wherein the base is less than six inches long, whereby a person can hold the device lengthwise between a thumb and an opposing finger and spin the device; and

at least three amusing means on the base for amusing a person by providing manipulative exercises involving the person's hand, wherein the amusing means are selected from the group comprising:

(a) an outside edge of the base that is bounded by an arcuate surface and extends substantially the length of the base, whereby the person can place fingers on a side of the base opposite the arcuate surface and rock the device back and forth on a support surface;

(b) a cylinder rotatably mounted on the base, whereby the person can spin the cylinder;

(c) a plunger movably mounted in telescoping fashion on the base and resiliently biased to protrude outward beyond a first end of the base, whereby the person can push the plunger toward the base;

(d) a clip slidably mounted on the base and resiliently biased to remain in a latched position relative to the base, whereby the person can snap the clip into and out of the latched position;

(e) a lever pivotally mounted on the base and resiliently biased to remain in a latched position relative to the base, whereby the person can urge the lever away from the latched position;

(f) a hole extending through a second end of the base, whereby a person can insert a finger through the hole and spin the device about the finger; and

(g) at least one word embossed in braille on the base.

22. (original) The amusement device of claim 21, wherein the group further comprises a spherical ball rotatably mounted in the base in such a manner that a portion of the ball protrudes outward from the base, and the base provides first and second upwardly

facing bearing surfaces on opposite sides of the ball, whereby a person can place at least one finger on each of the bearing surfaces and roll the device across the support surface.

23. (previously amended) The amusement device of claim 21, wherein the base is configured to be spun about three orthogonal axes extending through the base while the base is supported in respective positions between a person's thumb and an opposing finger.

24. (original) The amusement device of claim 21, wherein at least five of the amusing means are provided on the base.

25. (cancelled)

26. (previously amended) A hand-held amusement device, comprising:

a base less than six inches long, wherein the base is sized and configured to be held in hand between a person's thumb and opposing finger, and selectively spun about an axis extending between the thumb and the opposing finger;

a spherical ball rotatably mounted in the base in such a manner that a portion of the ball protrudes outward from the base, and a person can roll the ball relative to the base;

a plunger movably mounted in telescoping fashion on the base and resiliently biased to protrude outward beyond a first end of the base, whereby a person can push part of the plunger into the base; and

a hole extending through an opposite, second end of the base, whereby a person can insert a pencil through the hole and spin the device about the pencil.

27. (new) A hand-held amusement device, comprising:  
a spherical ball that defines a diameter; and  
a base having a length up to six inches and at least three times as great as the diameter, wherein the base is configured to be held in a person's hand, and the ball is rotatably mounted in the base in such a manner that respective portions of the ball protrude outward from opposite sides of the base, and a person can hold the ball between a finger and opposing thumb and spin the base about the ball, and alternatively, a person can place his fingers on the base in a manner that straddles the ball and roll the device across a support surface, and wherein at least one word is embossed in braille on the base.

28. (new) The amusement device of claim 27, wherein an outside edge of the base is bounded by an arcuate surface, and a person can place fingers on a side of the base opposite the arcuate surface and rock the device back and forth on the support surface.

29. (new) The amusement device of claim 27, further comprising a plunger movably mounted in telescoping fashion on the base.

30. (new) The amusement device of claim 1, wherein an outside edge of the base is bounded by an arcuate surface, and a person can place fingers on a side of the base opposite the arcuate surface and rock the device back and forth on the support surface.

31. (new) The amusement device of claim 1, further comprising a plunger movably mounted in telescoping fashion on the base.

32. (new) The amusement device of claim 3, further comprising a plunger movably mounted in telescoping fashion on the base.